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FOREWORD

The fifteenth century Renaissance was a time of renewal or rebirth of the classical antiquities. Renaissance educators believed in an education that turned out men equipped to fit knowledgeably into any walk of life, a well-rounded education. This is the same kind of education offered here at Mount Saint Mary's College. We have a liberal arts curriculum which acquaints us with any of the arts in which we may be interested. Therefore, it is fitting for Mount Saint Mary's College to have a Renaissance Festival of Arts Week because here at the Mount we encourage the rebirth of creativity daily, and to begin the celebration of the Renaissance spirit of creativity, Westwords presents its second issue.

EVE MOBLEY

Potter and Pot

"But now, O Lord, thou art our
father; we are the clay, and thou
our potter; and we are all the
work of thy hand." Isaiah 64:8

His pug mill runs day and night
he prefers a broken vessel

marred
unbalanced
rejected

Razing to raise again

on a centered wheel turning

His wholly hand steadying clay and right-
ening height, formed in a wrestle

moistened
pliable
reformed

Blazing to glaze again

in a molten kiln burning

His design to unite
in the re-creator's nestle

returning
re-aligned
refined

Praising to praise again

in freely restored concerning

MELANIE LINK

bare root roses

one morning i woke up and realized i had no roots – that meant i didn't belong. either here, or there, or anywhere for that matter. i thought about not belonging and tried to list the organizations i belonged to because everyone belongs to something, don't they? i mean, it would be terrible to think that you had nowhere to go or be. so because that's exactly how i felt, i began to list the places i had been. i was born in chicago but that last afternoon on michigan boulevard when i told the lion what i really thought of him – the lion lying in front of the art institute, well, since that afternoon when i stuck my tongue out at him i haven't belonged to chicago. that was out. new york, i lived there, maybe i belonged there. i imagined greenwich village and sam's apartment, five heart-thumping, exhausting flights up and no elevator and the local lads messing up the walls with graphics and not-so graphics, and i walked up the stairs in my thoughts and knocked on the door, calling sam, sam, answer the damn door, i need to know if i belong to new york, finally he came to the door, towel wrapped around him like he was still sixteen and forever in the process of stepping into or out of the shower, i said hi sam, can i come in, and he sort of looked funny because we never had private belongings when we were kids and he still felt his apartment was mine, so he said sure, come in, but i'm showering. fix yourself a drink. i said thanks and did and yelled through the shower door, sam, i've lost my roots. you can't he said, you can't just lose roots, you maybe misplaced them. no, i said, i really lost them. pruned them, he said. okay, i said, where did i prune them. i don't belong to chicago, i vaguely remember my way around and even when i look at the places i used to hide, i don't feel the ah ah ah's you're supposed to feel when you see something that formed you when you were a kid. so back to new york. i found my way to the village and

to sam's apartment, but the stairs made me pant, and i cursed him for still living in that crazy walkup. well, there's always fifth avenue. maybe i belonged there. i worked there once when i could still sit for photographers, when i didn't think it was the damdest most foolish thing a girl could do. but i didn't belong. when sam came out of the shower he wouldn't believe i lost my roots mainly because that kind of thought would pain him too much. i told him i had been thinking of chicago and he said ugh, no wonder you lost your roots — who wouldn't in such a vile city. then we tried to think of what we liked in that city and we listed the wind, lake michigan, he listed the lions at the art institute, but i said i'd disowned them; navy pier, we both liked that, except when dead fish floated by, the museum of science and industry but only the coal mines because you actually went down and it was always cold there and vaguely damp with a funny smell like water on the basement floor, what else, i liked the top of the prudential building because it was sixty stories high and when the air was clear the city looked like a jade. it was only later that i knew the stone was plexiglass and painted. we listed du-par's restaurant because i smoked my first cigarette in public there, feeling so grand — the only grand ladies i knew were joan crawford and mrs. sheridan. we liked the corner store because it had dozens of little and big jars stuck everywhere filled with boston baked bean candy (i've never been able to find that candy here) and we liked the tailor who worked in front of his basement window on the street. we would watch him thread a needle and sew a button, always careful, always at the same speed, and when he finished, we would wave and he would nod his head rapidly up and down, instead of smiling. we liked to look in the house of the black family across the street, because they had jumbles of things everywhere and i wished i could go in and look carefully at everything, but my mother said it would be rude. later we were friends. we kept listing things and after some time decided we didn't have enough to make roots with, so we said maybe it's relationships with people that count. sam said probably that counted for more than anything, but roots were

something different. i said i wasn't so sure and besides when you've lost your roots, you grab at straws so we listed the people we loved; that took longer than the places, though not much. i could see that sam was starting to agree, but he said, well, what about los angeles. you must have your roots there. i said in los angeles if you had roots the department of water and power would have ripped them out several dozen times while putting sewers in, or looking for subversives or whatever they do under the street so endlessly . . . he said children, having children gives you roots. no, i said, children would bear my no-roots. so then he said, clever boy, make some up. make up some wild story that you'd really like to happen and start your life from that point of view, but i said, i'll fool you and my friends but what am i going to do at three o'clock in the morning when i wake up without any roots. that's the problem. making up stories and games is easy. what's terrible is three o'clock in the morning. i quoted what fitzgerald said about in the dark night of the soul, it's always three o'clock in the morning. i finally said, you think i have roots in israel, and he said go and see, so when i could, i did and then reported back that of all the places i'd been, israel pulled nearest my heart, but that maybe that was because it was a holy land. i told him one day i was near the wall in jerusalem — i said you must see jerusalem, sam, it's holy, good holy — and i watched all the people, some were christian and they were looking, the moslems were doing something else and the jews were praying and some people of every kind were sticking papers into the cracks in the wall. what are they doing, i asked, what is that, what is being stuck in the wall, and someone answered that people from all over the world send words, messages, prayers maybe to be put near the holy wall . . . roots, maybe, trying to find their roots like i was. i told sam that israel was a beautiful place to find roots if you could, but if you were rootless, then israel made you feel even more isolated. well, after we'd talked for a long time, sam said what do you need roots for anyway. why not be happy with the leaves and flowers that you have and i thought about it and like the little prince, was silent

and then asked about my roots again. i needed to find them, that's all, that was the only thing i could explain to sam, he said he was in russia once and he tried to imagine being there like my grandfather was, living, working, dying there, but he couldn't quite get it though there were moments, he said, when he felt close to it. we talked again and decided that not having roots made me feel empty, disconnected, really, that's the word, disconnected from those invisible threads that unite us all and that i would need to find them. Since i don't believe that things, or people, just sprout up, like that, you know, full grown, then i would have to work on finding them, and that was going to be some heavy load, because it wasn't like a chapter in a book, this many pages today, this tomorrow, but this was going to be with me like a dance theme, always there, never really leaving me free until i could find them, name them and accept them . . . i think i told sam that i was feeling the changes creeping, that i was moving on or off but anyway moving toward something new, and he said it was good, that you couldn't move until something moved inside and then, you couldn't stop what had begun. he's right too. except since then, i have lost and found myself so many times that i began to feel like i used to when we went to riverview, the amusement park where they had a house of mirrors and the mirrors were meant to make you look fat, or skinny, or tall, or short or silly, and suddenly – one wall with no mirror. Oh – the terror. i was filled with terror at the thought of being invisible like the wall, no mirror to image the person and once in a while, when life was going along too fine, suddenly – no image. i was lost again, and needed to remember the miracles of finding again. whether or not i'd call these findings roots, i don't say, but whatever they are, they keep me in touch with myself, and when i start to fly off, something says hey, no, come back and i land with a thud and have to find a new way again. sam doesn't know all of this last part because mainly when we speak now, it's long distance phone units, and we've promised each other we'll visit soon, but i probably couldn't say it in words any more, anyway. after all the words, silence is lovely and necessary and healing. never for a minute though have i forgotten that i have no roots and that i don't really belong. even so . . .

FRAN GOODMAN

The Gate

The gate has rusted again. No
matter. Some boy with a sling
shot's been pecking holes

in it, and the paint won't last
another winter. I would have
put on fresh, but the rains look

hard this year. Come May we'll
fix it again. Remember when Tom's
boy split his leg on the coppered

nails and only apples would ease
the pain for a while? Guess I'll
always think of him and apples

together. Funny how things stay
with you and don't change much,
just get a little used to wearing.

SISTER CHRISTINE MC NAMARA, S.S.L.

Portrait of a Week

On Monday I peeked,
through my mailbox
with no obstruction of view
on the other side.
On Tuesday I shined the
glass, rubbing the gilt numbers
until they shone.
On Wednesday I dusted it
empty floor.
Thursday I scrubbed it
with an old toothbrush.
Friday I oiled the hinges.
Saturday, behold —
a message wrapped in linen.
Sealed in gold and addressed
in china black script.
I was overjoyed,
until I found out
I had opened the wrong mailbox.

LINDA DELL HESCH

Time, Prufrock and the Waste Land

While T.S. Eliot's concern with "time" crescendos most beautifully in "Four Quartets," it resonates throughout even his earliest poems. In "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" and "The Waste Land," Eliot grapples with the pressures which the past and the future bring to bear on man living in the present. Bound by a past he cannot escape and summoned to a future he cannot control, man is caught in the tension between these two polarities and locked in the realm between them. In both "Love Song" and "The Waste Land" this present-time ensnares man in a death-in-life existence. Eliot thus links the concept of time and the development of theme in each poem.

In "Love Song" time chains Prufrock to his impotence and reflects the death-in-life of a person unable to act in the present moment. In the "Waste Land" time reveals the death-in-life experience of past and future being only fragmented ends of a sterile present. Perhaps this relation between time and theme emerges most clearly in Eliot's development of time, his time-imagery and his portrayal of the choices man makes in confronting time.

"The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" begins with a summons, an invitation to take a journey through the streets of the night and confront an "overwhelming question." And yet this question, though certainly important, is not urgent, for "there will be time" for all the incidentals which shape it: the "yellow smoke that slides along the street," the "works and days of hands," a "hundred indecisions, a hundred visions and revisions." Nine echoes of this cry, "there will be time . . .," reverberate in the beginning of the poem. This repetition becomes a haunting chant, a mounting glorification of the escape which time offers. And Prufrock, unable to confront his life as moving forward into the future toward this question which is assuming the significance of "disturb[ing] the universe," settles back in his armchair and retreats into an interior reverie.

In this reverie, he hides in the assertion that time will continue to offer him opportunities to act, and yet he finds no incentive to move toward this action. Time begins to take on urgency, but Prufrock wallows in the comfort of postponing the future: "and how should I presume . . . and how should I begin?" In the final part of the poem, Prufrock rationalizes his inability to act in the present moment by posing the question, "would it have been worth it, after all . . .?" The future which he cannot meet becomes a world he experiences vicariously, a shelter from the present which still offers him the possibility of redemption from his sterile, unfulfilled existence. But his enslavement between the two poles of time is final. Turning to the past, he announces that

> I should have been a pair of ragged claws
> Scuttling across the floors of silent seas.

Turning to the future, he asserts that

> I have heard the mermaids singing, each to each.
> I do not think that they will sing to me.

Prufrock, caught between the realms of what he "should" have been and what he "will" not be, drowns in the time of the present. Time engulfs him: he can no longer escape it, or postpone it, or rationalize it. He only wakes to this reality before being swallowed by it, but Eliot, through his careful development of Prufrock's confrontations with time, has revealed from the beginning that Prufrock's life is a living death, that the sky, "like a patient etherised upon a table," mirrors the death-in-life he lives. And so the journey from the past into the future which he does not take drowns him in the present.

While this movement of time in "Love Song" is essentially an oscillation between the past and the future, in "The Waste Land" it becomes much more complex and elusive. Kristian Smidt[1] discusses three movements of time which Eliot interweaves into this poem: linear, extended, and cyclical. Linear time, the flow of present into future, the succession of one event after another, manifests itself in the crowd flowing over London Bridge to the sound of Saint Mary Woolnoth keeping the hours. Extended time, which moves without any direction or order and which appears to have no unifying pattern, reveals itself in the lady of "A Game of Chess" and her hysterical "What shall we do tomorrow? What shall we ever do?" But perhaps Eliot's concern with cyclical time, the perpetual revolution/repetition of seasons and events and themes, is most crucial to "The Waste Land." And it is this movement of time which links so closely with the death-in-life theme of the poem.

[1]Kristian Smidt, *Poetry and Belief in the Works of T.S. Eliot* (New York: The Humanities Press, 1961), p. 169

"The Waste Land" begins with the mingling of spring and winter, of lilacs and the dead land, of snow and warmth. This paradox of the seasons inverts the normal attitude toward the cycle of life and death: the invitation to come alive is a cruel thing, while the inevitability of death is security and warmth. Just as Prufrock hears the summons to move into his journey, the inhabitants of the Waste Land witness the call to birth which the seasons bring. And yet, again like Prufrock, their death-in-life is so much more comfortable, so much safer. As Prufrock escapes time through rationalization, the Waste Land people escape it by going "south in the winter."

This seasonal escape from the cycle of winter giving way to spring, of death erupting in re-birth, results in sterility: the dry stone gives no sound of water, the thunder is without rain, sexual encounters are mechanical and lifeless. Like Phlebas, the Phoenician, the inhabitants of this land are trapped in the whirlpool; immersion, which suggests the life-giving renewal of Baptism, brings them the death by water against which they are warned from the outset. The past, revealed in the barbarous rape of Philomel and the death-dealing love of Dido, echoes in the present with the prostitution of the typist and Lil's abortion; this sexual cycle, like the seasonal one, reflects not life but death. Eliot thus continually interplays past and present, myth and reality, memory and desire in his depiction of time as the bestower of sterility.

Only in the final movement of the poem does he approach the future and the possibility of regeneration: the speaker sits upon the shore, fishing, with the arid plain behind him, and wonders, "Shall I at least set my lands in order?" Out of the sterility of past and present emerges the fertility of the future. The development of time thus resolves itself quite differently than in "Love Song"; while Prufrock "wakes" to the present only in time to "drown," the speaker in "The Waste Land" turns from the arid plain to the future and, in the symbolic act of fishing, moves toward setting his lands in order, a step which Prufrock never takes.

Perhaps this difference between the poems is most evident in the time-settings of the two worlds. Prufrock's world is one of evenings and "restless nights," of dusks and sunsets; in short, he lives in perpetual night, without even the suggestion of morning breaking and calling him to a new beginning. In "The Waste Land" world, however, time moves from the "brown fog of a winter dawn" to the "brown fog of a winter noon" to the "violet light" of evening. This pattern of the birth and death of each day does not finalize life, as Prufrock's night does, but portrays life as continually renewing itself. Thus, the cyclical movement of time reflects the death-in-life world of the Waste Land but ultimately suggests that death can become life, that April, though cruel, can bring fertility and birth and fulfillment.

While Eliot's development of time moves toward this rebirth in "The Waste Land," in "Love Song" it moves toward the drowning-death of Prufrock. Eliot carefully links these movements with his time-imagery. Prufrock worries about the "bald spot in the middle of [his] hair," about his thinning arms and legs, about the consequences of daring to eat a peach – details which reveal the fact that he is growing old and is unable to move in rhythm with time and its resultant changes. Perhaps the crucial time-image is that of Prufrock "measur[ing] out his life with coffee spoons" – unwilling to risk whole-hearted living, content with meticulously controlling even the effort he puts into creating his own life. Prufrock is almost assaulted by images from the past: Michaelangelo, who dominates the conversation centuries after his death; John the Baptist, whose head brought in upon a platter, reveals the intensity of his commitment in life; Lazarus, whose resurrection indicates that death is not final. However, the image of Hamlet is the one which Prufrock most vehemently rejects and, ironically enough, most closely resembles. Caught in the inertia of being unable to act, Hamlet becomes the modern-day Prufrock, trapped in this same inertia. Thus, these images of great men from the past revolve around Prufrock measuring out his coffee spoons of life. Eliot further enhances this death-in-life existence by the image of the "yellow fog that rubs upon the window panes," the "yellow smoke that slides along the streets." While these images create a feeling of sensuality, they also suggest the process of aging, the "yellowing" of time which brings Prufrock no nearer to re-birth. The detailed images of his life, the haunting images of past heroes, the enveloping images of growing old – all reverberate in his "love song" and echo the reality of his dying-life.

The time-images of dying life in "The Waste Land" are, like the poem itself, somewhat more elusive than those in "Love Song." Singling out even a few of the poem's many time-images reveals the inter-relationship between these images and the death-in-life theme. The "rattle of bones," the dry rock, the "dry sterile thunder without rain" suggest the dying barrenness of the land; the daily rituals of "hot water at ten./And if it rains a closed car at four" reveal the routine existence which characterizes the people of this land. Shadows are an important image throughout the poem; in the beginning, the speaker invites us to

> (Come in under the shadow of this red rock),
> And I will show you something different from either
> Your shadow at morning striding behind you
> Or your shadow at evening rising to meet you;
> I will show you fear in a handful of dust.

This shadow at morning, reflecting the past, and the shadow at evening, suggesting the future, mark off the two ends of present time, which is offered to us in death, the "fear in a handful of dust." Thus, the present is a death-in-life experience.

At the end of the poem, this shadow-image recurs:

Who is the third who walks always beside you?
When I count, there are only you and I together.
But when I look ahead up the white road
There is always another one walking beside you.

In his notes to "The Waste Land" Eliot indicates that this third person/shadow-image could be Christ on his journey to Emmaus; those traveling with him, preoccupied with death, do not recognize that death has become life, that the past and the future of the earlier image do not become "fear in a handful of dust" but the Christ who has made of death a passage to life. Eliot thus uses the shadow-image to point toward a reversal of the poem's death-in-life theme. This possibility of a greater reality echoes in the cry of the cock, "co co rico co co rico," and recalls the betrayal of Peter, a betrayal which resolved in greater life for him. The cock's cry also heralds the dawn and its damp gust of rain bringing renewal to the land.

Just as the yellow fog wrapping about Prufrock indicates his physical aging and metaphysical sameness, the "violet hour" of "The Waste Land" suggests a movement toward this rebirth the cock heralds. Baptism, Penance and Easter — the great mysteries of coming to life through death — are associated with the color violet, and Eliot's use of violet here intensifies this relationship between death and life. The violet hour calls the Waste Land inhabitants to the words of the Thunder: "datta" (give) "dayadhvam" (sympathize) "damyata" (control), by requiring that we cope with the present; these three elements of "setting one's lands in order" move us into the future. Again, as with his other time-images, Eliot's color image points toward the mystery of death-in-life becoming life-through-death. Unlike Prufrock, who moves no nearer to new life, the people of the Waste Land are invited to draw into this rebirth.

Entry into this rebirth, taking place in time, demands choices enacted in time. Eliot brings this need for choice to bear on the death-in-life themes of each poem by depicting man's choices when confronted with the limitations time imposes. "Love Song" illustrates a concrete encounter between a man and the decisions with which he grapples: Prufrock struggles with the possibility of proposing to a woman; yet, in his own mind, this action begins to have ramifications which will disturb the entire universe. As mentioned earlier, his doubts mount from "do I dare? " to "how should I begin?" to "would it have been worth it, if . . .? " His fear of being unable to return and change his decision, of being held forever responsible for the choice he makes, keeps him from choosing at all. And here the maxim, "Not to decide is to decide," is borne out, for Prufrock's inability to choose is ultimately a choice bringing death. He cannot enter into a future which is beyond his control; he cannot risk committing himself to a world in which everything is on-going, forward-moving. Neither can he control the past, for he has no real place in it. Yet Prufrock, by refusing to confront his place in the present moment, tries to retreat into the past by remaining static and refusing to choose.

Interestingly, the speaker in the poem's epigraph gains his place in time by making a choice, even though he is unaware of its consequences. Not realizing that Dante will return from death to life, Guido reveals his identity to the pilgrim-poet and thus unwittingly gains immortality. His choice to "speak without fear of infamy" brings him to life – in the form of memory. Thus, even the death-world of Dante's Inferno holds possibilities of life. Prufrock, however, sinks into death because he refuses to choose life, however insignificant or routine it might be. Time, which normally unfolds in a birth to death progression marked by little dyings and risings, is for Prufrock the prolonged state of drowning, of death-in-life.

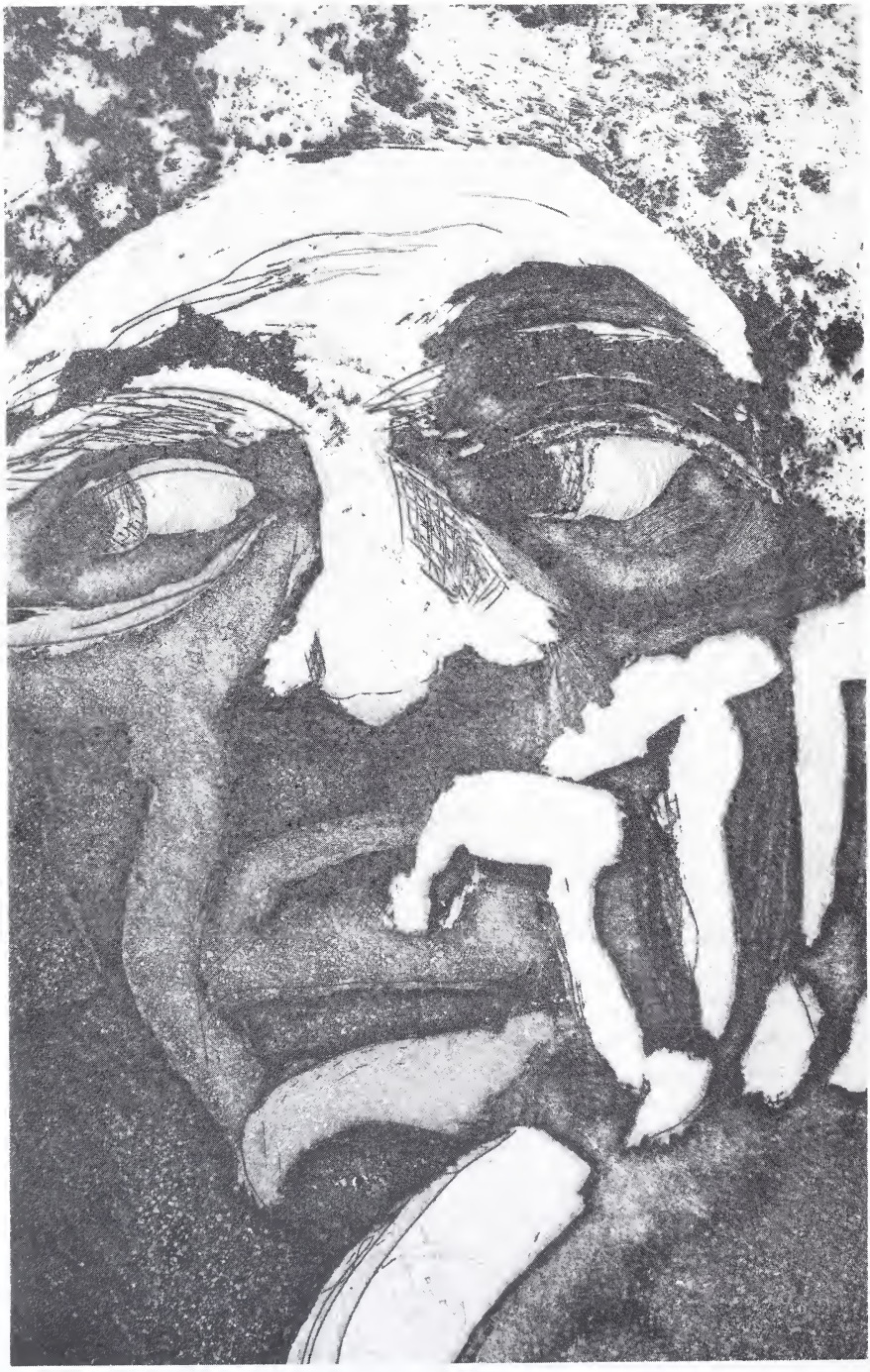
The people in "The Waste Land" also confront choices similar to those Prufrock faces. In the first section of the poem, the speaker remarks that, "I had not thought death had undone so many" – an allusion to the antechamber of Dante's Inferno, where those who refused to choose in life cannot choose in death, and are consigned to madly pursuing a waving banner. With the "HURRY UP PLEASE IT'S TIME" of the bartender, a sense of urgency begins to build and move the inhabitants toward the future. However, with Madame Sosostris, the future becomes not a reality to be experienced, but a problem to be manipulated and controlled. Like Prufrock, the Waste Land people try to escape time – by avoiding its seasons, reveling in its memories,

trying to control its provisionality. The Thunder invites them to make choices in the present moment – to give, sympathize, control: to give in to the "awful daring of a moment's surrender," to compassionate with one another in this shared surrender, and to listen sensitively to the present moment and respond in a respectful, rather than manipulative, mode of living. In response to this choice, the speaker reflects on the possibility of setting his own lands in order – a possibility that offers the hope that he will choose to move out of the death-in-life of the Waste Land.

As in "Love Song," the epigraph weighs impressively upon the movement of the poem. The Sibyl, who has forgotten to ask for youth as well as for a long life, announces that she "yearns to die"; yet she cannot really choose death for she has already chosen to escape it by seeking long life. Her choice thus binds her to time. The Waste Land inhabitants, in choosing to escape death, are also carving out for themselves this death-life. They must begin to re-choose life by choosing the above-mentioned surrender to the present moment. This choice brings with it the possibility of joining the past and the future together – even though, for the speaker, these remain only "fragments shored against [his] ruins." Nevertheless, while "Love Song" ends in death, "The Waste Land" resolves itself by proposing these life-choices and by blessing the one who chooses: "Shantih shantih shantih." Eliot thus relates these choices with the actual death-existence which has reverberated throughout the poem.

In his development of time, his time-imagery and his depiction of man's choices in confronting time, Eliot brings together this realm of past/present/future and the death-in-life themes of both "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" and "The Waste Land." The characters in each poem are caught between the poles of time; their struggles to fruitfully experience their lives in the present reveal a great deal about the difficulty of this task and the consequences of failing to fulfill it. Bound and summoned at the same time, man must enact his journey from the past into the future in the "hour at hand." Perhaps this call to the present moment is the lasting echo of these two poems.

SISTER CHRISTINE MC NAMARA, S.S.L.



CATHERINE SCHEIBE

Shelley

Etched forever on my eye-mind the parched hill
That sun-slashed day.
The mourners inched on footless legs and stumbled
Tear by tear.
Carried their loss like captured thieves
Bound, chained.
Stunned-mute, heard words as shield
Agains the dark forever
Where you lay.

FRAN GOODMAN

Renaissance 1

SPRING 1973 MOUNT ST. MARY'S COLLEG

A rebirth of the **FESTIVAL OF ARTS WEEK**, rebirth of crea
spirit of the Renaissance, May 6 through May 12.

THE WEEK'S ACTIVITIES

Sunday – Renaissance Festival Day
art, music and drama in a carnival atmosphere

10:00 Tower Music
Procession to Chapel / Celebration of Mass
Renaissance Singing

11:30 Brunch in the Circle
Entertainment: Troubadors
Dancing on the Green
Carnival Games and Displays
Arts and Crafts Patio

1:00 Renaissance Women Onstage: Selected Scenes from tl
performed outdoors

2:00 Madrigals Concert
Little Theater

Monday through Thursday – **Renaissance Today**, activities an

Thursday and Friday – "**Guest in the House**", rebirth of the d
William Dozier Little Theater · 8:00 p.m

Saturday – **Beaux Arts Ball**, costume ball to end the week's f
Campus Center

Friends of the Renaissance and the Mount are cordially invitec

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y and celebration in the

rama

hibits planned by departments

a program – a play directed by

ities

share in this week of rebirth.

What's In a Name? A Rose By Any Other Name Would Still Have Thorns – Wouldn't It?

"Eve was framed, and we've been
badly ribbed ever since"
badly libbed ever since
as Ms. Florence Nightingale,
suctioning as she sings
"bummertime, an' da livin' is easy
da fish are jumpin', and da cotton is high
your daddy's rich, an' your ma is good-lookin'
so hush, lil product of conception, don't you breathe"
consort abort womb tomb
presume Eve was framed blamed
famed in shame ––
–oh holey Medea, mother of mod,
shallow be thy name –

But my name is Elisabeth.
And it came to pass, that when Elisabeth heard
Mary's salutation, the babe leaped within
her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the
Holy Ghost; and said,
Blessed art thou among women; blessed is
the fruit of thy womb.
And whence should the mother of my Lord come to me?
For, lo, as the voice of thy salutation sounded in
mine ears, the babe leaped within my womb for joy.

MELANIE LINK

A Song of You and Me

Sing
of dandelions
blown
to lawns grown green,
and watermelon
on chins
dribble-dancing red cheeks,
and ladybugs
in May
winking sun-burnt orange.

Sing
of wagons and wheels and watercans
spilling
sunshine
on band-aid knees and sling-shot pockets,
of rockets and swings
up
and
down
to the day.

And sing again
of you and me
and marbles and jacks
and mudpies and pennies
and lemonade-for-a-nickel

And sing.

SISTER CHRISTINE MC NAMARA, S.S.L.

The Peanut Race

One August Sunday, the year the War ended, Kathy went to a picnic. It was for the employees of the company where her father worked. Kathy's father made tanks. Once he took Kathy and her brother to see a tank. But she wouldn't climb inside of it. Donald cried when he was lifted up to the hole in the top. Their father laughed but he didn't make them go into that dark place. Now that no one needed tanks, Kathy wondered what her father would make.

She had heard her parents wondering, too, through the flowered wall paper between her room and the dining room. Mother and Father were sitting at the oak table, drinking coffee. Their voices were too quiet for Kathy to hear the words. But she heard the worry.

Now on their way home from the picnic, Kathy curled up on the seat behind her father. It had been a happy day. She opened her dusty hand. The Liberty Lady on her silver dollar winked in the sunset. She stared at it for miles.

All the way going to the picnic grounds, she had read road signs. She had to catch the Burma Shave verses quickly or she'd miss the joke. She watched for each announcement for small towns. One was Minerva, population 3002. She wondered about the two. Then, while her father idled the motor and waited at a traffic signal, she saw a girl about seven holding the hand of a younger brother. They were crossing the street eating Dairy Queens. There they were, she told herself, the two in 3002.

She pretended she was the girl living in Minerva. She and Donny were walking home to their farm. She picked a large white house with a porch and a red barn beyond it. In front of the barn she could see a round green pond. Kathy climbed up on her knees to watch the last of her pretend home. From the rear window of the car she read "Chew Mail Pouch Tobacco" painted on the barn.

"Kathy, sit down, I can't see out the rear view," her father yelled. She sighed and slipped back into her seat still facing the rear. She wouldn't let anyone paint a sign on her barn, ever. She smoothed the white blouse that hung loose over her pink cotton shorts.

Now she imagined a school with one teacher for all the grades. Her name was Miss Huggins and she had happy eyes. She read *Alice in Wonderland* and *Mary Poppins* and poems out loud every day after lunch.

Kathy's real school was an old three story brick building with a concrete playground. The bricks were all sooty but Kathy could still read 1908 above the main door. 1908, that was before even father had been born. The school wasn't far from her house, down the block and across the street car tracks on St. Clair Avenue.

Kathy and Donald had always lived in the two-family house on 123rd Street. It had gray shingles and a porch across the front for the downstairs family and one above it for the upstairs family. There was a patch of grass between the steps and the slate sidewalk. There was a larger green patch in back where Kathy and Donald played and their mother grew a victory garden. Only this year she planted zinnias and marigolds and morning glories next to the vegetables. Kathy's house was exactly like every other house on her block.

At the end of the block was Mr. Larson's candy store. On hot summer evenings, most of the kids went to Larson's for ice cream cones. But Kathy usually didn't go. Once she gave Mr. Larson her nickel in exchange for one scoop of vanilla on a sugar cone.. In the door way of the candy store, the ball of vanilla toppled down the front of Kathy's dress and splashed on the sidewalk. She ran home crying still carrying the sugar cone. Her father came down the steps from the front porch and holding Kathy's free hand, marched her back to Larson's. Mr. Larson was careful this time to push the vanilla way down into the cone, but she knew that he didn't like her any more.

She glanced at her father now as he turned off the highway onto a gravel parking area. At the picnic, there were contests and games for the children. Kathy and Donald entered the peanut race. It was for children between four and eight-years old. Kathy was the tallest. She listened while the lady explained the rules:

"I want all of you kids to stand behind this line. Now look over there, between those two trees. We've hidden lots of peanuts in the grass. When I say go, you run over there and the boy or girl to find the most peanuts will get a nice prize."

She handed each of them a paper bag and Kathy ran with the others. Already she could see a lot of peanuts. Each time she picked one up, she'd see another a few feet away. Her sack was getting full. Suddenly, she stood up. All the other kids had gone back to the starting point. She was alone. Was the race over? She could see the lady counting Donald's peanuts. She could see

peanuts in the grass near her feet. Quickly, Kathy gathered a dozen more nuts and raced back to where the other kids were waiting. She pretended she had been there all the time. Still, she was surprised when the lady counted the peanuts in her bag and told her she had the first prize. She had never won a contest before. When the lady placed the cool silver dollar in her hand she was too shy to say thank you.

All the rest of the afternoon while she played kick-the-can with the other kids and ate watermelon, Kathy thought about her dollar. Every few minutes she ran over to check if it was still safe in her mother's purse. Her mother and father sat with the other parents in the shade, playing bridge and drinking beer.

When it was time to go home, she curled up on the back seat of the Ford, her fingers tight around her prize. She let Donald look at and touch it but only while it was in her hand.

"What you gonna buy with it, huh?" Donny asked. "You could get one of everything at Larson's."

"Oh, Donny, you dummy! This silver dollar is too valuable to spend on candy. I'll probably just save it forever and ever."

"You're the dummy!" He tried to grab the dollar but she tightened her fingers about it.

Kathy turned her back on her brother and looked at her dollar. She almost forgot to watch for Minerva, population 3002. Maybe the girl would be outside playing.

The wind brought the smell of newly fertilized fields. She held her breath as long as she could and looked over at Donald. He was asleep, his light brown head banging gently on the window frame. Once before when they had been driving in the country and had passed a field like this, Kathy and Donald had complained, "Ugh! What stinks?" Their father was impatient.

"That's a good healthy smell. Without fertilizer we wouldn't have enough to eat. Nothing could grow. So stop fussing."

Now the wind was taking her parents' words and tossing them out to the fields. Only a few came into the back seat. First, her mother's soft voice, questioning.

"But . . . you . . . job . . . what . . . to . . . if . . . don't?"

Her father's answer: "Just . . . and see . . . maybe . . ." Now she heard an entire sentence, because he raised his voice: "I'll just have to do the best I can, for Crissake." His dark head above his sunburned neck was very straight.

The car was going awfully fast. Kathy knew it was faster than her father ever drove. He threw his cigarette out his window and a spark blew back into her window and burned out on the gray seat between her feet and Donald's.

She looked out her window and saw the Minerva sign, and watched a police car pull out. It had been behind a billboard that said, "I'd walk a mile for a

Camel." She could read it, even though they were moving fast because it was the same sign as the one on the side wall of Larson's.

The wind was quiet as her father and the policeman talked. Then her father slowly followed the officer's car and parked behind it at the courthouse. Mother, Kathy and Donald, who was still asleep, waited in the car.

"Is that the jail? Is he putting Daddy in jail?" Kathy leaned on the back of the front seat, whispering in her mother's ear.

"No, no, honey." Her mother turned and brushed the hair off Kathy's hot face. "In these little towns, when you get a ticket, you have to go right in and pay for it. Daddy will be right back."

Kathy waited. The Dairy Queen was right down the block. But she didn't see the girl with the little brother.

Her father was coming down the steps of the courthouse. But instead of opening his car door, he leaned in at her window. "Kathy, I need that dollar."

She didn't understand. Then she looked down at her tightly closed fist in her lap.

"Kathy, I need it to pay the fine. I'll give you another dollar tomorrow."

"Yes, Daddy." She handed him the silver dollar.

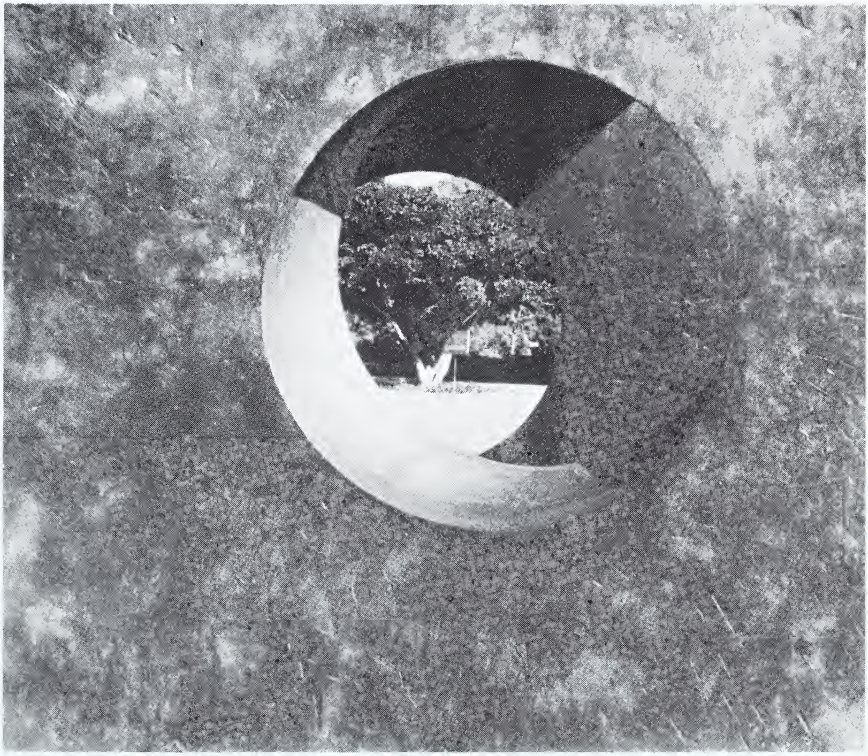
ELAINE BERMAN

SISTER ANNCARLA COSTELLO, S.N.D.

Approaching the Grille, Suspiciously

God, I wanted to call you out
On the way you up and plucked
Toni Bell like a posy
From our nosegay.
Grafted onto a new vine,
Pruned by your husbandry she is
Now in a vase, while
We're left to seed. Dancing,
Technicolor in lighted winds,
I can see Toni's white petals
Over black. But no more tendrils.
I smell her fragrance —
Starch and Ivory soap
No longer Desert Flower.
I am concerned
Upon one point, though, God.
Does she get enough
Sun in there?

MOLLY YOUNG



RAMONA KAN

Ten

Once upon an age, when the world was young and I was foolish – climbing trees and talking to them was a way of life. I belonged to two worlds then: one filled with magic and wizardry, the other filled with meadows and clover . . . and mischief. The meadow held many secrets – including a few apple cores.

Even now, I can taste the forbidden joy of munching thirteen green apples, stolen from a neighbor's tree. Nor have I forgotten the castor oil and remorse that soon followed. Then there was Sunday School . . . always Sunday School. On Sundays, my black patent "Mary Jane's" dragged me reluctantly to church, as I clutched the collection-plate nickel that sometimes wound up as an ice cream cone. Not that I was a hardened sinner, you understand, just an innocent ten-year-old with little will power and a great, vast world to explore.

Ten was the year for exploring. In those days, we lived just outside the city across from a tree-ringed lake. It was a paradise filled with secret hiding places, wild violets and jack-in-the-pulpits. In the winter, when the ice was thick, the lake was used for skating. No one ever fell in, although we secretly hoped . . .

There were only two girls in our neighborhood and thousands of boys, so I joined the gang and became a tomboy. We fearlessly played football, jumped from trees and garage roofs, and crawled cowardly through dark, musty storm drains. The latter was a dare. You can't say "No" to a thousand boys who are bigger than you.

Then there was the delicious joy of having two boy friends at once, and the vanity of it all. One wintery day, I put on the new yellow dress my mother had just finished and stood shivering in the snowbound yard, hoping that one of my loves would look out and notice. Vanity has its own rewards; mine was a cold.

The snow fell hard and deep that winter, piling tall peaks against the telephone poles. School was a mile away and remained open through hail and blizzard in the hope that at least one child would appear and education would continue. So, through knee-deep snow I ran to school beside an older girl with long, thin legs. I hated her and the thought that if I tripped, they wouldn't find my body until spring.

Every life has problems. Mine came in a small, mean package – a five-year-old brother. From infancy, Richard was determined to ruin me. He was an opportunist, who at the age of two became the family spy. He was everywhere – looking, listening, and reporting. Later, I discovered that Richard's silence could be bought. He loved money and hoarded his loot in large, steel piggy banks.

Richard also maintained an arsenal. And I did a lot of running. Mother said he loved me but I knew better. He was just waiting to pick my bones, grab my birthright, and stuff it in his piggy bank.

Richard-watching was the worst of all possible worlds. One day, fate in the shape of a ten-foot-deep drainage ditch, bridged by a plank, was cut in front of our house. "Keep away from there, Richard!" I called in my Richard-watching voice. I then watched helplessly as Richard defiantly ran across the plank and fell in. Since I couldn't pull him out and knowing I'd be blamed, I ran next door to play, hoping he would vanish. He didn't. Short hours later, Richard's: "You get me out of here!" was heard and I was spanked. The spankings now came thick and fast, piling up until I tripped over the leftovers. Then came the inevitable – I was spanked over a matter of principle.

"She's all arms and legs," they said. "Do something." They were the relatives. So once a week I hopefully rode the bus downtown for a dollar's worth of tap, ballet, baton and voice lessons. One day after class, the bus broke down and I was stranded. After an hour of running into the candy store to check the time and eye the jelly beans, I realized that I would soon starve to death. Now I knew my practical parents would think this a big waste of money and talent. Even Richard might cry a little. So I weakly pushed a bony arm across the counter and gasped, "Five cents worth of jelly beans, please."

Thus loaded, I walked slowly home through the chill twilight, eating and feeling the jelly beans clank around inside. A block from home our old car pulled up with my father sitting grim and frozen at the wheel like an icicle ready to splinter to the ground. The future looked dim. Would he spank a starving, tired, talented girl who carried an empty jelly bean sack? He would. Later, Richard watched quietly as the walls of justice crumbled around me, and he vowed reform – and he decided he would never buy jelly beans.

So, the days and months slipped by like water through limp fingers, and each falling year left its own ghost. The world and I grew old. Yet, even now as I huddle by the fire of my old memories, I can recall the year of ten when I ran barefoot and free. The year when life was calling . . . and there was so little time to answer.

SHARON MELKONIAN

The Girl in the Red Woolen Dress

Look at that girl
Starting to spiral,
In a red woolen dress
And almost grown legs.
I get dizzy for her
As she enters her spin;
I grip the rail –
She skates away.
Wait, my feet shout
Let me spin free with you.
She does not turn,
I have no skates.
So I watch the ice
For her red dress again;
She smiles, she waves,
And my child has passed.

ELAINE BERMAN

Witch-hunt

When I was in fifth grade, there was a witch on our block. We were sure old Mrs. Bodkin was one. Her house, a gabled brownstone fortess surrounded by a ragged ten-foot-high hedge, seemed old even for our well-established neighborhood. Ancient cedars ringed the house, and one near the house seemed a giant crouching in wait. The door was a heavy wooden one with a thick metal ring for a knocker. And a weathervane-witch flew on a broomstick on top of the roof. I suppose that's what really confirmed our suspicions. We always walked a little faster when we went by Mrs. Bodkin's house.

We never saw much of her. In fact, I myself had only seen someone – maybe it was the housekeeper, maybe just a shadow – at an upstairs window a couple of times. Sometimes it moved, sometimes it seemed to be looking, and listening. It was impossible to see anything or anyone through that hedge, and we never stopped at the gate to look into the yard. But we knew she lived there, all the same.

One day we were walking home from school, Cindy and I. It was a burnt-orange October day, and a slight wind riffled the black-flecked brown and yellow leaves on the sidewalk. We had been talking about our history class that day (in fifth grade, we were at last learning "real" history), which had been about the Salem witch-hunts. "It seems like all the good stuff happened hundreds of years ago," I said wistfully. "Hey, wouldn't it be neat if there were real witches alive today? Then maybe we could have some excitement – maybe a modern witch-hunt or something!"

"But we *do* have a real witch alive today, dummy – right on our own street." Cindy was four months older than I, and usually took a superior tone with me. I guess she thought I was dumb and inexperienced compared to her. Her statement stung a little, but I didn't mind – I could be pretty dumb at times. But we were still best friends.

But today I couldn't agree with Cindy as usual. "I don't know, Cindy. I mean, nobody's ever really *seen* her – being a witch, I mean. We don't have any *evidence,*" I added triumphantly.

Cindy was insistent. "But we've *felt* her."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean she's got power – she *does* things."

"Now you're being a dummy – where'd you get that idea?" I said. Somehow I felt like defending old Mrs. Bodkin.

"I just know it."

"Prove it," I challenged.

"All right, smarty – you remember when all the electricity went off last week for half the day?" Cindy began. "*She* did that."

"Oh, that was because of the storm we had – Daddy told me so."

"But who do you think started the storm?" Cindy returned. "She did – for revenge."

"Revenge?" I said, puzzled. "What for?"

"Well, a couple of days before the storm, my brother Jimmy was collecting for his paper route, and when he came to Mrs. Bodkin's house, she told him she wanted him to throw the paper closer to the house, and not in the ivy, because she was getting too stiff to go that far for it."

Something made me say, "Maybe if she was really that powerful a witch, she could make the paper come to her by magic."

Cindy didn't laugh. "Very funny," she said. "Anyway, she said if he wasn't more careful, she'd call the paper and have Jim fired. The next day Jimmy *did* throw the paper closer – right through the window. He was scared when he saw it happen, so he started riding away fast, but he heard somebody yelling after him from the house – Mrs. Bodkin, of course. She was mad, I bet – so she went and started the storm that very night."

I didn't say anything for a minute. "Okay, so what if she is a real witch? What'll we do about it?"

"We'll hunt her, and tell on her, just like those girls in Salem," said Cindy brightly.

"But how?"

"We'll need help – the police, the F.B.I. –"

"How about the fire department?" I ventured.

"Don't be silly – what would the fire department have to do with . . ." Cindy stopped a moment, struck by something. "Hey – you know, that's probably it! We'll get the fire department to take her in for cooking up trouble."

"Wait a minute," I said. "I was just kidding . . ."

"Look, do you want to catch Mrs. Bodkin, or don't you? All we have to do is pull the fire alarm, and the fire department will come. Or do you want to go and get her yourself?"

"No . . . but are you sure it's right?"

"Sure I'm sure," said Cindy. "Look, here's the fire alarm box. Just pull it, and everything will be all right."

"No, you do it."

"You were the one who wanted to have a real live witch-hunt."

I hestitated. "All right. But *you* tell them about Mrs. Bodkin, and where to go."

"I will," promised Cindy.

I walked up to the little red-and-white call box which stood on the corner like a patient sentry. I had never seen one up close before. From the little glass window, my face stared back at me – a little scared. I reached for the lever and pulled. Almost at once the whole box began vibrating with a ringing like my Mickey-Mouse alarm clock, only louder. In less than a minute, we could hear the whine of the sirens and the foghorn blast of the firetrucks, distant, but coming closer and faster. I began to feel scared. I looked at Cindy. She didn't look so brave either.

"I . . . I didn't think you'd really do it," she murmured.

"I'm scared, Cindy – what if we get in trouble?"

"Let's run before they get here," she said suddenly. "They'll never know who did it."

We started running down the block, away from Mrs. Bodkin's house, but somehow I couldn't get my legs going. It was like I was on one of those moving belts near the cash-register at the supermarket, trying to run one way while the thing was going the other way. I couldn't seem to get anywhere. Cindy was a little ahead of me. Finally we stopped, out of breath. "Let's just sit here on the curb, like nothing happened," she said. Without a word, I agreed. As we sat down, we saw the fire trucks arrive at the call box; a few men jumped out, and walked around as if looking for someone. My mouth was dry and my heart was pounding from the run. Cindy and I didn't say anything; we just watched.

The fire chief's red station wagon started coming down the street, our way. I guess he caught sight of us, and pulled over. He shouted out from inside the car, "Do you girls know anything about that fire alarm?" Cindy said no we didn't. He nodded, and said, "I just thought you might have seen somebody fooling with it. Okay, thanks anyway, girls."

He leaned back and was about to drive off, when I blurted out, "Wait –". Cindy poked me, but it was too late. The fire chief had stopped the motor and was getting out of the car. As he walked toward us I could see he had a kind face, though it was stern now. "Do you have something to tell me?" he said in a strong, quiet voice. I found myself saying, "We did it. I pulled the alarm. I didn't mean to cause trouble . . ." My voice caught. I was almost crying now, and I looked down at the fire chief's shoe toeing the forked cracks in the sidewalk.

"Do you realize what you've done, young lady?" He kept a calm, even tone as he went on, "Every time we answer a call, real or not, it involves a lot of danger and expense for the department. It costs a lot of money to run our big trucks, and they are tricky to handle – they could easily tip over on sharp curves at high speed and kill a man. And on a crank call like this, it would be for nothing. Would you like that to happen?"

The idea was so horrible – to be responsible for murder, practically, that I could only murmur, "No."

He went on, "Well, we have no way of knowing whether a call is for real or not, so we have to answer them all. Now what do you have to say for yourselves – do you think it was worth it?"

"Well, we were only trying to help the neighborhood." Cindy had spoken up at last, and the fire chief turned to her. "We thought if you could take Mrs. Bodkin in for questioning . . ."

"Who's Mrs. Bodkin?" he asked.

"She's – a witch!" said Cindy. "She does awful things."

"A witch, huh? " He knitted his eyebrows, and I couldn't tell whether he believed us or not. "Well, that certainly deserves looking into. Why don't you girls come with me and we'll get this straightened out – with Mrs. Bodkin herself."

"Oh, no," said Cindy. "She might do something terrible." I kept quiet, half of me thinking maybe it would be good to get Mrs. Bodkin out in the open, and the other half afraid that Cindy was right.

"Don't worry. We fire chiefs get special training for handling witches."

I looked at Cindy. "We better go." I told her. The fire chief opened the car door and I got in, so Cindy had to follow. We drove up in front of Mrs. Bodkin's house.

"This the place? " he asked, pulling up at the dark structure, hooded in the late afternoon shadows.

"Uh-huh," I answered.

We got out, and walked slowly, Cindy and I on either side of the fire chief. I was surprised to see scattered patches of sunlight in the yard that had managed to filter down through the dense trees around the house.

We stopped at the front door. It was like a dungeon-door with a tiny square peephole at eye level. There was no doorbell, so the fire chief used the big metal ring to knock. After a few minutes, the door opened.

"Yes? " The voice wasn't what I'd expected from a witch – it was old, yes, but not hard or crackly. It was tired, and almost sad. I was afraid to look up, but when I did, I saw an old lady with wispy yellow gray hair tied back in a bun. She wasn't tall, and looked smaller because she stooped; she seemed like an old, gray, little girl as she stood there looking up at the fire chief with pale, frightened eyes.

"These girls wanted to see you, ma'am," he said politely.

Mrs. Bodkin looked at us for a moment, then back at the fire chief. "There must be some mistake – no one comes to see me. All my children have moved, and my husband is dead for years. I live alone – no one ever comes –"

"No mistake, Ma'am. I believe these girls have a question to ask you."

I looked hard at Mrs. Bodkin, and suddenly I didn't feel afraid any more. I swallowed, "How do you do, Mrs. Bodkin?"

"How do *you* do?" she returned. I could see she really meant it.

"Uh, we were just wondering ..." I began, wondering what I should say, now that the real Mrs. Bodkin stood before us.

Cindy, who hadn't spoken yet, chose this moment to observe, "You know, she doesn't *look* like a witch."

"Witch? " asked Mrs. B., surprised. I had thought she would be angry, but she wasn't. "Who said anything about witches, child? There are no witches around here – least not nowadays."

"But why is your weathervane . . . *it's* a witch." I pointed toward the housetop, and we all followed with our eyes.

"Oh, that." Mrs. Bodkin's eyes seemed almost young again, as if they shared some secret. "That's no witch, dear. It's part of the Bodkin family crest – a Puritan witch *hunter*. From Salem, in fact. It's been in the family for centuries – so I suppose you could say I have witches in the family background."

"You mean your family was part of the Salem witch hunts?" I gasped. Even Cindy was getting interested now. "We're studying them in school," she said. "They're awfully interesting."

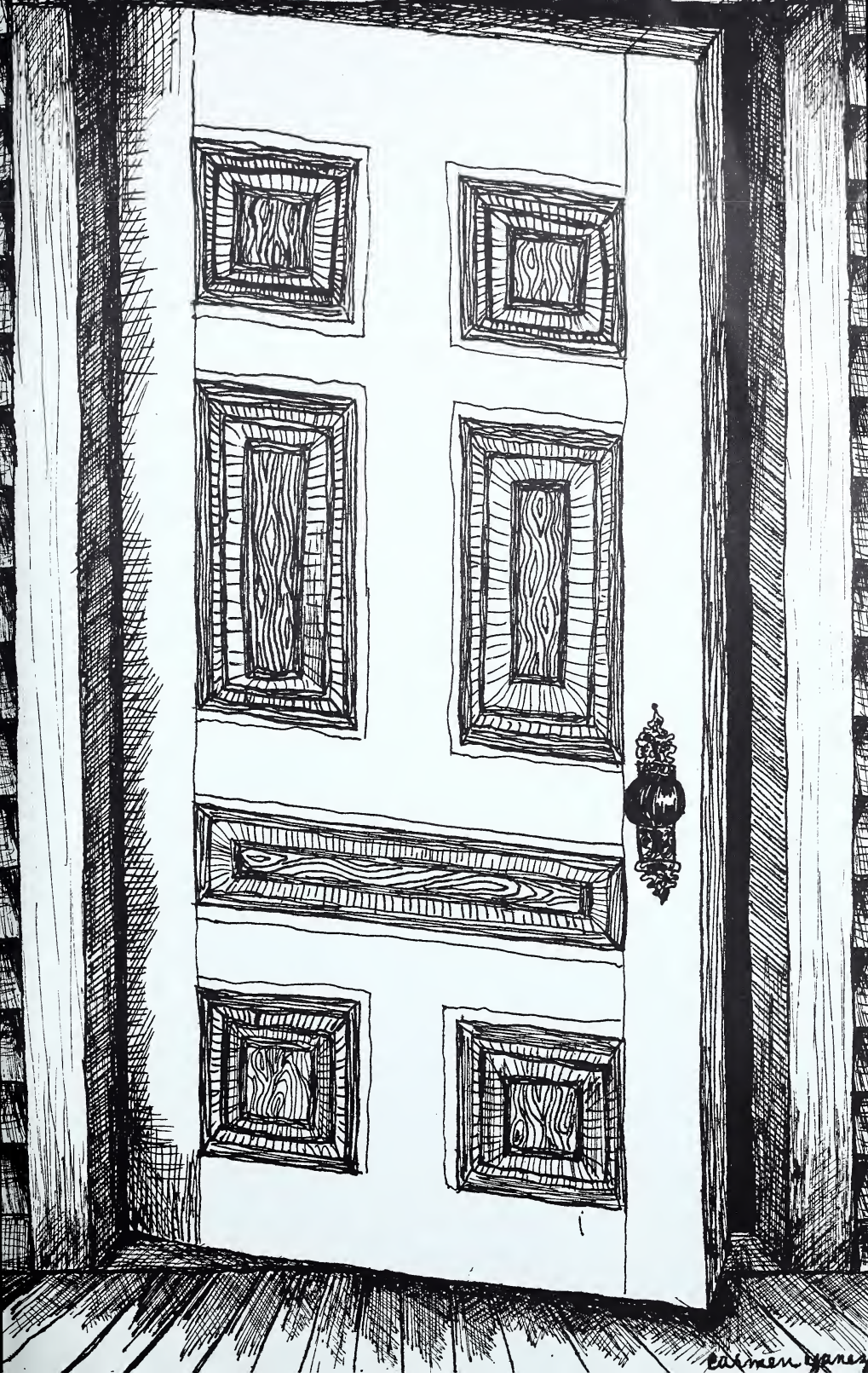
"Could you – would you tell us something about them, Mrs. Bodkin? " I asked. "Well, I wasn't there myself." (she almost giggled) "but I could show you some books and things I have here in the house – if you'd like to come in."

"Sure!" I said. I looked at Cindy, who wasn't quite as enthusiastic. "Come on," I whispered. "It's okay – she's on our side."

"Well, ladies, I must get back to business," said our friend the fire chief. "Glad to see you girls found out what you wanted. Bye now – and stay away from false alarms." He was trying to sound stern, but his eyes were smiling.

"We will – and thank you, sir," we said together. Then we followed Mrs. Bodkin inside, and the big wooden door closed behind us.

MARY JO BECK


carmen yanez

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